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EXAMINER	
RINES, ROBERT D	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3626	

DATE MAILED: 01/13/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/976,650	BORSAND ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Robert D. Rines	3626	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *12 October 2001*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-34* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-34* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date *10/12/01*.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Notice to Applicant

[1] This communication is in response to the patent application filed 12 October 2001. The IDS statement filed 12 October 2001 has been entered and considered. Claims 1-34 are pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

> The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

[2] Claims 20-21, 30, and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

[A] In claim 20 of the present case, the applicant recites the phrase "monitors said representation of filling a prescription" (Claim 20; line 3). It is unclear as to whether the applicant intends to "monitor' the filling of a prescription or simply monitor the "representation" of filling a prescription. Therefore, claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 as being indefinite

for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the applicant regards as the invention.

[B] Claim 21, by virtue of their dependence on claim 20, and when analyzed in the same manner described with respect to claim 20, also fails to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the applicant regards as the invention. Therefore, claim 21 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 as well.

[C] Claims 30 and 33 when analyzed in the same manner described above with respect to claim 20, are also rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the applicant regards as the invention.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> (e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

[3] Claims 1-13, 15, 18-25, 29-30, 32, and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Judge (United States Patent Application Publication #2002/0111832).

[A] As per claim 1, Judge teaches a pharmaceutical information tracking system comprising: a payor (Judge; paragraphs [0028] [0040] and Fig. 1); a computer system accessible by said payor including (Judge; paragraphs [0028] [0040] [0046] and Fig. 1): a pharmaceutical subsystem, comprising a pharmaceutical representation (Judge; paragraphs [0114] [0115] [0120] and Figs. 9-10); a prescription subsystem, comprising a prescription representation for said pharmaceutical representation (Judge; paragraph [0131]); and a reimbursement subsystem, comprising a reimbursement representation for said prescription representation (Judge; paragraphs [0113] [0114] and Fig. 8).

[B] As per claim 2, Judge teaches a system wherein said pharmaceutical subsystem is accessible by said prescription subsystem and said reimbursement subsystem (Judge; paragraph [0113] [0115] and Figs. 8-9); wherein said prescription subsystem is accessible by said pharmaceutical subsystem and said reimbursement system (Judge; paragraph [0113] [0115] and Figs. 8-9); and wherein said reimbursement subsystem is accessible by said pharmaceutical subsystem and said prescription subsystem (Judge; paragraphs [0114] [0115] and Figs. 8-9).

[C] As per claim 3, Judge teaches that said computer system further including a single database or a plurality of interconnected databases (Judge; paragraphs [0059] [0136] [0138] [0155]).

[D] As per claim 4, Judge teaches that said reimbursement subsystem further comprising a reimbursement rule (Judge; paragraph [0044] [0116] [0117]) and said reimbursement

representation including a monetary value (Judge; paragraphs [0146] [0147] and Fig. 13), said reimbursement rule determining the monetary value of said reimbursement representation (Judge; paragraphs [0117] [0146] [0147] and Fig. 13).

[E] As per claim 5, Judge teaches that said computer system further including an eligibility subsystem and an eligibility criteria (Judge; paragraph [0050]), said eligibility subsystem communicating said eligibility criteria to said reimbursement subsystem, said pharmaceutical subsystem, or said prescription subsystem (Judge; paragraph [0114] and Fig. 8)

[F] As per claim 6, Judge teaches that said eligibility subsystem further comprising an eligibility decision, wherein said eligibility subsystem analyzes said eligibility criteria to generate said eligibility decision (Judge; paragraphs [0050] [0114]).

[G] As per claim 7, Judge teaches that said eligibility decision is sent to said prescription subsystem before said prescription subsystem generates said prescription representation (Judge; paragraphs [0050] [0131] [0132]).

[H] As per claim 8, Judge teaches that said pharmaceutical subsystem further comprising a plurality of pharmaceutical representations and a subset of eligible pharmaceutical representations (Judge; paragraphs [0114] [0117] [0118] and Fig. 9), wherein said prescription subsystem selectively identifies said subset of eligible pharmaceutical representations from said plurality of eligibility representations using said eligibility decision (Judge; paragraphs [0114] [0117] [0118] [0131], Figs. 9 and 13).

[I] As per claim 9, Judge teaches that said prescription subsystem further comprising a patient attribute (Judge; paragraph [0050] [0059]), wherein said prescription subsystem analyzes said patient attribute to selectively create said prescription representation (Judge; paragraphs [0050] [0059] [0131]).

[J] As per claim 10, Judge teaches a system wherein said patient attribute is a medical history (Judge; paragraph [0050] [0059]).

[K] As per claim 11, Judge teaches a system wherein said medical history includes medication history (Judge; paragraphs [0050]).

[L] As per claim 12, Judge teaches that said prescription subsystem further comprising a formulary (Judge; paragraph [0117] [0118] [0119]), said prescription subsystem selectively identifying said pharmaceutical representation in said formulary (Judge; paragraphs [0117] [0118] [0119]) and selectively creating said prescription representation (Judge; paragraphs [0117] [0118] [0119] and Fig. 14).

[M] As per claim 13, Judge teaches that said pharmaceutical subsystem further comprising a representation of an unfavorable pharmaceutical interaction in a patient caused by two or more pharmaceuticals (Judge; paragraph [0136]) wherein each pharmaceutical is represented by said pharmaceutical representation (Judge; paragraph [0136]), and wherein said pharmaceutical

subsystem detects said representation of an unfavorable pharmaceutical interaction (Judge; paragraph [0136]).

[N] As per claim 15, Judge teaches a system wherein said prescription subsystem is prevented from generating said prescription representation for said pharmaceutical representations that would result in said representation of unfavorable pharmaceutical interaction (Judge; paragraph [0136]).

[O] As per claim 18, Judge teaches a system including a superseding criteria, wherein said prescription subsystem alters said prescription representation after said prescription subsystem creates said prescription representation (Judge; paragraph [0136]).

[P] As per claim 19, Judge teaches a system wherein said altering includes a canceling of said prescription representation (Judge; paragraph [0136]).

[Q] As per claim 20, Judge teaches a system wherein said prescription subsystem includes a representation of filling a prescription, wherein said prescription subsystem monitors said representation of filling a prescription (Judge; paragraphs [0131] [0137]).

[R] As per claim 21, Judge teaches a system wherein said representation of filling a prescription includes a representation of re-filling a prescription (Judge; paragraphs [0131] [0137]).

[S] As per claim 22, Judge teaches said reimbursement subsystem further comprising a pre-certified status, wherein said reimbursement of said pre-certified status is attributed to said prescription representation by said prescription subsystem at the time said prescription subsystem selectively creates said prescription representation (Judge; paragraphs [0114]-[0121]).

[T] As per claim 23, Judge teaches a computer system further including an eligibility subsystem, said eligibility subsystem further comprising an eligibility criteria and an eligibility decision (Judge; paragraphs [0046] [0050] [0114] and Fig.8); wherein said eligibility subsystem analyzes said eligibility criteria to create said eligibility decision (Judge; paragraph [0050] [0114] and Fig.8); wherein said prescription subsystem analyzes said eligibility decision to determine if said pre-certified status is attributed to said prescription representation (Judge; paragraphs [0114]-[0121]).

[U] As per claim 24, Judge teaches that said reimbursement subsystem further comprising a reimbursement rule and a change in said reimbursement rule (Judge; paragraphs [0028] [0114]), wherein said change in said reimbursement rule is made by said reimbursement subsystem, and said change in said reimbursement rule is accessible by said prescription subsystem or said pharmaceutical subsystem in a substantially simultaneous manner (Judge; paragraphs [0114]-[0121]).

NOTE: Although Judge does not specifically discuss changes in reimbursement rules, Judge does indicate that the benefit structure for a given patient is actively retrieved from the 3rd-party insurance provider (Judge; paragraphs [0028] [0046]). Further, Judge notes that since the patient's health plan, i.e., benefit structure retrieved via the Internet, can be integrated with the health management and pharmacy service provider, insurance companies can readily disseminate new programs or initiatives (Judge; paragraph [0036]). The examiner is interpreting the above statements of Judge as encompassing the applicant's desire to incorporate changes in reimbursement rules into the pharmaceutical information tracking system.

[V] As per claim 25, Judge teaches said reimbursement subsystem further comprising a cost analysis and a cost criteria (Judge; paragraphs [0146]-[0149]), wherein said reimbursement subsystem generates said cost analysis using said cost criteria (Judge; paragraphs [0146]-[0149]).

[W] As per claim 29, Judge teaches a method of tracking pharmaceutical information comprising the steps of: using a single computer system to track pharmaceutical (Judge; paragraphs [0114] [0115] [0120] and Figs. 9-10), prescription (Judge; paragraph [0131]), eligibility (Judge; paragraphs [0050] [0114]) and reimbursement information (Judge; paragraphs [0113] [0115] and Figs. 8-9); and pre-certifying a prescription before generating an electronic representation of the prescription (Judge; paragraph [0114]-[0121]).

[X] As per claim 30, Judge teaches a method of tracking pharmaceutical information further comprising detecting a representation of an unfavorable pharmaceutical interaction (Judge; paragraph [0136]).

[Y] As per claim 32, Judge teaches a method of tracking pharmaceutical information further comprising altering a prescription representation after generating a representation of a filled prescription (Judge; paragraphs [0131] [0132]).

[Z] As per claim 34, Judge teaches a method of tracking pharmaceutical information further comprising consulting an electronic formulary before generating a prescription representation (Judge; paragraphs [0117] [0118]).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham* **v.** *John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

[4] Claims 14, 16-17, 27, and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Judge in view of Neuman et al., (United States Patent Application Publication #2002/0143582).

[A] As per claim 14, Judge teaches identifying and generating a representation of unfavorable pharmaceutical interactions (Judge; paragraph [0136]) but does not specifically teach commonly known adverse drug interactions such as allergies or therapeutic redundancy.

[i] However, Neuman et al., does teach the identification of redundant pharmaceuticals as a contraindication to a proposed prescription (Neuman et al.; paragraphs [0080] [0083] [0104]).

[ii] It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined the teachings of Judge with those of Neuman et al. Specifically, it would have been obvious that such a combination would have resulted in a system which allowed for the verification of information that may be pertinent to the present prescription request e.g., potential interaction with other medications that the user is presently taking (Judge; paragraph [0136]). Additionally, a combined system would specifically include therapeutic redundancy and drug-allergy considerations (Neuman et al.; paragraph [0080]). The motivation to combine the teachings would have been to perform a drug use evaluation to determine the nature of a potential conflict of a proposed prescription by referencing the patient's past medical history for allergic reactions or by consulting the patient's prescription history to determine if two or more drugs prescribed to a patient are in conflict because they are in the same therapeutic class (Neuman et al.; paragraph [0081]).

[B] As per claim 16, Judge teaches identifying and generating a representation of unfavorable pharmaceutical interactions (Judge; paragraph [0136]) but does not specifically teach commonly known adverse drug interactions such as allergies or therapeutic redundancy.

[i] However, Neuman et al., does teach the identification of an unfavorable allergy interaction in a patient wherein said pharmaceutical subsystem detects said representation of an unfavorable allergy interaction in a patient (Neuman et al.; paragraph [0080]).

[C] As per claim 17, Judge teaches wherein said prescription subsystem is prevented from generating said prescription representation for said pharmaceutical representation that would result in said representation of an unfavorable interaction in a patient (Judge; paragraph [0136]). Judge fails to specifically teach identifying adverse allergic reactions.

[i] However, Neuman et al. teaches identifying potentially adverse drug-allergy reactions in the patient (Neuman et al.; paragraph [0080]).

[ii] Regarding claims 16 and 17, the obviousness and motivation to combine as discussed with regard to claim 14 above are applicable to claims 16 and 17 and are herein incorporated by reference.

[D] As per claim 27, although Judge teaches a patient medical history, which would likely include past and present diagnoses (Judge; paragraph [0046]), Judge fails to specifically teach a diagnosis or storing a diagnosis with the appropriate prescription.

[i] However, Neuman et al., teaches said prescription subsystem further comprising a diagnosis, wherein said prescription subsystem stores said diagnosis with said prescription (Neuman et al.; paragraph [0035]).

[ii] It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined the teachings of Judge with those of Neuman et al. Such combination would have provided a patient medical history in the database (Judge; paragraph [0046]) and further included a diagnosis stored with associated treatments in the database (Neuman et al.; paragraph [0035]). The motivation to combine would have been assemble and view information pertinent to the creation of a prescription including drug lists, drug evaluation alerts, and diagnosis (Neuman et al.; paragraph [0035]).

[E] As per claim 31, Judge teaches identifying and generating a representation of unfavorable pharmaceutical interactions (Judge; paragraph [0136]) but does not specifically teach commonly known adverse drug interactions such as allergies.

[i] However, Neuman et al. teaches identifying potentially adverse drug-allergy reactions in the patient (Neuman et al.; paragraph [0080]).

[ii] Regarding claim 31, the obviousness and motivation to combine as discussed with regard to claim 14 above are applicable to claim 31 and are herein incorporated by reference.

[5] Claims 26 and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Judge in view of Portwood et al., (United States Patent #6,305,377).

[A] As per claim 26, although Judge teaches a reimbursement subsystem in communication with a prescription subsystem (Judge; paragraphs [0113] [0115]), Judge fails to teach a treatment protocol.

[i] However, Portwood et al., teaches communicating a treatment protocol in addition to a medication prescription (Portwood et al.; col. 7, lines 6-60).

[ii] It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined the teachings of Judge with those of Portwood et al. Such combination would have resulted in a system providing a copay counselor to users to identify lower copay alternatives (reimbursement) included in the patient's plan by a third-party benefit provider (Judge; paragraph [0113]). Further, such a system would have been capable of communicating an optimal rather than simply the most convenient medical regimen for the prescribed drug (Portwood et al.; col. 2, lines 27-30). The motivation to combine the teachings

would have been to reduce costs to the entity paying for the prescriptions (Portwood et al.; col. 2, lines 44-47) by reducing patient non-compliance with a prescribed medical regimen (Portwood et al.; col. 2, lines 17-21).

[B] As per claim 33, Judge teaches generating a representation of a filled prescription but fails to teach monitoring a representation of patient usage after generating a representation of a filled prescription.

[i] However, Portwood et al., teaches monitoring patient usage (Portwood et al.; col. 7, lines 6-60).

[ii] It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined the teachings of Judge with those of Portwood et al. Such combination would have resulted in a method to track pharmaceutical (Judge; paragraphs [0114] [0115] [0120] and Figs. 9-10), prescription (Judge; paragraph [0131]) information. Further, such a system would have been capable of sending timely reminders to the patient to take the medication in accordance with the prescribed regimen (Portwood et al.; col. 5, lines 1-15). The motivation to combine the teachings would have been to assist the treating physician in prescribing the best medical regimen for the patient and not merely the most convenient thereby reducing noncompliance by a patient with the prescribed medication regimen (Portwood et al.; col. 2, lines 17-30).

[6] Claim 28 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Judge and Neuman et al., and further in view of Portwood.

[A] As per claim 28, Judge teaches a pharmaceutical information tracking system comprising: a payor (Judge; paragraphs [0028] [0040] and Fig. 1); a computer system accessible by said payor including (Judge; paragraphs [0028] [0040] [0046] and Fig. 1): a pharmaceutical subsystem comprising a plurality of pharmaceutical representations (Judge; paragraphs [0114] [0115] [0120] and Figs. 9-10), a representation of an unfavorable pharmaceutical interaction (Judge; paragraph [0136]), and a subset of eligible pharmaceutical representations (Judge; paragraphs [0136] [0118]); a prescription subsystem comprising a plurality of prescription representations (Judge; paragraph [0131]), a patient attribute representation (Judge; paragraphs [0050] [0059] [0131]), and a representation of filling a prescription (Judge; paragraphs [0131] [0135]); a reimbursement subsystem comprising a reimbursement representation (Judge; paragraphs [0113] [0114] and Fig. 8), a reimbursement rule (Judge; paragraphs [0044] [0116] [0117]), a pre-certified status (Judge; paragraphs [0114]-[0121]), a cost analysis (Judge; paragraphs [0146]-[0149]), a cost criteria (Judge; paragraphs [0146]-[0149]), and an eligibility subsystem comprising an eligibility criteria (Judge; paragraphs [0050] [0114] and Fig. 8) and an eligibility decision (Judge; paragraphs [0114]-[0121]); and wherein said pharmaceutical subsystem, said prescription subsystem, said reimbursement subsystem, and said eligibility subsystem share information in a substantially simultaneous manner (Judge; paragraphs [0113] [0114] [0115] and Figs. 8-9).

[i] Judge fails to teach a treatment protocol or a identifying an unfavorable allergy interaction (Neuman et al.; paragraph [0080]).

[ii] However, Portwood et al. teaches a treatment protocol (Portwood et al.; col. 7, lines 6-60), and Neuman et al. teaches identifying an unfavorable allergy interaction (Neuman et al.; paragraph [0080]).

[iii] It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined the teachings of Judge with those of Neuman et al. and Portwood et al. Specifically, it would have been obvious that such a combination would have resulted in a system which allowed for the verification of information that may be pertinent to the present prescription request e.g., potential interaction with other medications that the user is presently taking (Judge; paragraph [0136]). Additionally, a combined system would specifically include therapeutic redundancy and drug-allergy considerations (Neuman et al.; paragraph [0080]). Additionally, such a system would have allowed the prescription to be accompanied by a treatment protocol including the sending of timely reminders to the patient on when to take the medication in accordance with the treatment protocol (Portwood et al.; col. 5, lines 1-15). The motivation to combine the teachings would have been to perform a drug use evaluation to determine the nature of a potential conflict of a proposed prescription by referencing the patient's past medical history for allergic reactions or by consulting the patient's prescription history to determine if two or more drugs prescribed to a patient are in conflict because they are in the same therapeutic class (Neuman et al.; paragraph [0081]). Further motivation would have been to

assist the treating physician in prescribing the best medical regimen for the patient and not merely the most convenient (Portwood et al.; col. 2, lines 17-21) and to reduce costs to the entity paying for the prescriptions (Portwood et al.; col. 2, lines 44-47) by reducing patient non-compliance with a prescribed medical regimen (Portwood et al.; col. 2, lines 17-21).

Conclusion

[7] The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Evans, ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORDS SYSTEM, United States Patent #5,924,074

Bloder et al., METHOD FOR SELLING AND DISTRIBUTING PHARMACEUTICALS, United States Patent Application Publication #2002/0111828

Docherty et al., SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR TERGETED INTERVENTIONS OF PHYSICIAN PRACTIVES BASED ON DEVIATIONS FROM EXPERT GUIDELINES, United States Patent Application Publication #2002/0143579.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Robert D. Rines whose telephone number is 571-272-5585. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30am - 5:00pm Mon-Fri.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Joseph Thomas can be reached on 571-272-6776. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

R.D.R.

11/6/06

C. LUKE GILLIGAN
PATENT EXAMINER